

Technostress and Social Media at Work – Investigating Negative and Positive Stressors and Strains from a Person- Technology-Fit Perspective

Karin Högberg
University West
Karin.hogberg@hv.se

Abstract

Multiple organizational social media (MOSM) foster new ways of communication, interaction and new encounters for organizations that can cause stress. There is a lack of studies focusing on both positive and negative stressors deriving from social media. In this study, both negative and positive stressors and strains deriving from using MOSM are studied in an international hotel chain with employees in eight European countries over a period of seven years. The results indicate that techno stressors such as work overload, work-life conflict, and changing algorithms create negative stressors. However, positive stressors such as the ability to create new ways of providing service were also found. The study makes a theoretical contribution to technostress research in the Information Systems research field by uncovering both positive and negative stressors and strains created over time as well as suggesting a development of the Person-Technology fit model.

1. Introduction

Social media has become a central part of our personal and professional lives, changing the way we interact online [1]. Social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram are increasingly being embedded into organizational work practices, leading to changes in both internal and external communication but also organizational structures, processes, and routines [2]. Organizations tend to use multiple organizational social media (MOSM), for both internal and external communication and interactions, i.e., they use a range of social media platforms for different purposes, such as marketing [2], service encounters, or internal organizational communication [3]. In addition, organizations interact with third-party platforms [4] that they do not manage. Earlier research suggests that social media has demonstrated improvements in knowledge sharing,

collaboration and communication [2-5] and provided organizations with new, immediate ways of stakeholder interaction [5] that are often viewed as a positive development with many benefits, both for organizations and stakeholders [1,3]. However, research also points out that it can have negative effects, for example, employees are confronted with much more information than they can process, which may generate information overload [6], as well as work overload [7, 8]. In addition, earlier research points out the blurring of boundaries between the private and work domains [7]. Social media-induced technostress has been identified as an essential consequence of using social media at work, as it could negatively impact job performance, and research has called for more insight to extend the knowledge about social media-induced stress on employees [8, 9, 10, 2, 11]. Technostress refers to stress caused by information and communication technologies, a commonly occurring negative state in today's digital world [6, 8]. Stress symbolizes the condition of imbalance experienced by an individual between the demands of a given situation and the individual's ability to meet them [13]. Hence, the theoretical phenomenon of technostress investigates *how* and *why* the use of information systems causes various demands on the individual. *Techno-distress* [14], refers to negative stressors such as reduced job satisfaction [16] and a reduction in job performance [17] and also involves "how and why individuals appraise Information Technology (IT) as a threat, experience consequent 'bad' stress, and are faced largely with detrimental outcomes" [9, p. 14]. Hence, technostress is now widely recognized as an unintended negative result of technology use [14, 39]. The opposite, positive stress deriving from technology is referred to as *techno-eustress* and has been defined as "the phenomenon that embodies the positive stress that individuals face in their use of IT and occurs when individuals appraise IT as challenging or thrilling" [9, p. 14]. Early research on technostress have focused on

that technostress often is associated with negative effects. However, lately researchers have pointed out the necessity of also studying positive outcomes of technostress [cf 2,6]. Hence, techno-eustress introduces a new theoretical aspect to the phenomenon of technostress by considering its positive aspects and outcomes. For example, with a new generation (the “millennials”), current (and future) employees are using IS in ways that previous generations did not [8]. In addition, a noteworthy amount of IT innovation originates from the consumer market and finds its way into organizations and professional settings from there. This is the case of social media, hence social media in workplaces can be addressed as IT-consumerization. This concept is often described as the adoption of consumer applications, tools and devices in a workplace setting [40]. Recently, research has studied the relationship between technostress and social media in the workplace [5,16]. A noteworthy stream of research have focused on technostress related to private social media use in the workplace [16]. Furthermore, traditionally, research on technostress relies primarily on two methods, questionnaire and/or experimental investigations stimulated by hypotheses to assess perceived stress and what causes them [6; 16; 17]. Both methods have limitations in the degree to which they are able to capture the contextual contingencies of a stressful situation, the first because it relies on participant recall, while the simulated environment of the second may not reflect a real work/life situation. Additionally, both methods are suitable for testing whether a specific IT causes stress, but neither method is suitable for finding what influences stress related to IT in the workplace [18]. Furthermore, given the little research on both negative and positive outcomes of technostress [39] and the importance of the topic, the aim of the present paper is to uncover and explain both techno-distress and techno-eustress stressors experienced by employees at work when using MOSM over time and the strains caused by them. Thus the present study extends the existing literature of social media-induced effects on employee MOSM use and the understanding of techno-distress and techno-eustress in the IS research field. The following research question is asked: *Which positive and negative MOSM-induced stressors can be identified and how do they affect employees?* A study of hotel employees in an international hotel chain is the context of the study. The theory of Person Technology fit [7] has been used as an interpretive lens for analyzing social media-induced stress in the case organizations. The theory was chosen due to its explanatory power that can facilitate a richer interpretation of social media-induced technostress. As a theoretical

contribution, both positive and negative stressors and strains deriving from MOSM over time are uncovered analyzed and contributes to the Information Systems research field. Also, the study suggests a development of the Person-Technology fit model to be more applicable for studies of social media used in organizations. The paper proceeds as follows: In the next section, key definitions and terms based on the technostress and social media literature. Thereafter the case study and methodology are presented, followed by a presentation of the findings of the study and a discussion. Thereafter the practical implications and limitations of the study is presented. The paper closes with conclusions.

2. Related research

2.1 Technostress

The term technostress was coined by Brod [19] who described it as a “modern disease of adaptation caused by an inability to cope with the new computer technologies in a healthy manner” (p. 16). Weil and Rosen [20] developed Brod’s definition by viewing technostress as “any negative impact on attitudes, thoughts, behaviors, or body physiology that is caused either directly or indirectly by technology” (p. 5). Research on technostress emphasizes that technostress can be attributed to continuous multitasking, re-learning and insecurity related to one’s work tasks, as a consequence of frequent IT paradigm changes [9]. Although earlier research shows that different technostress types are caused by different experiences, it emphasizes that the nature of the different types of stress is identical [7, 14]. Theoretically, the outcomes of stress depend on how a person experiences the technology and stress. In general, distress refers to negative stress, that is, negative emotions resulting from negative perceptions of an IT use. On the other hand, eustress refers to positive stress, that is, positive emotions resulting from positive perceptions of IT use [11]. Hence, technostress is highly subjective, and individuals using the same technology can respond with positive or negative stress. When stress is appraised positively, the outcomes are desirable. However, when stress is experienced negatively, it gives undesirable outcomes [21]. Earlier research on technostress points out that technostress directly raises the level of role conflict, while work overload reduces the level of job satisfaction and work performance [14]. While research on technostress mainly focuses on its negative effects, some studies have found positive outcomes. For example, Hung et al. [22] emphasize that technostress positively affected employee work performance. Similarly, Tu et al. [23]

also found that techno-overload was positively related to employee work performance. Salo et al [24] studied the use of smartphones and found that smartphone failures can derive both negative distress responses and positive eustress responses for others. The individuals that experienced positive stress emphasized that they were eager to learn from the experience.

2.2 Social media and technostress

The term “social media” refers to technology artefacts that support various actors in a multiplicity of communication activities for producing user-generated content, developing and maintaining connections and social relationships, or enabling other computer-mediated interactions [25]. Public social media such as Facebook and Twitter are often used by organizations e.g. for marketing purposes while enterprise social media are used for internal communications or internal knowledge exchange [2]. In the present paper, the definition by Van Osch and Coursaris [24] of social media used by organizations is used. It includes both internal and public social media use and hence involves a wider range of use by organizations. This definition was chosen since it is common that organizations use a range of social media platforms for various purposes. One stream of research on social media induced technostress investigates how private use of social media use in the workplace can be associated with technostress and the technostress creators [15, 8]. Another stream of research shows the implications of constant connectivity [24, 25]. Van Zoonen et al. [26] argued that work-related social media use was a source of boundary conflicts for employees, which in turn resulted in emotional exhaustion [26]. Maier et al. [28] investigated conflicts related to work-home conflict and the technostress related to this. A few studies acknowledged positive stressors. Similarly, [42] found that positive technostress created both more creativity and innovation among employees.

3. Theoretical framework: Person Technology fit model

In order to understand the advent of technostress related to MOSM, the present study follows Ayyagari et al. [7] and uses the Person Technology fit model which has the purpose of identifying what causes stress related to IT in the workplace. In the P-T fit model, it is assumed that *stressors* are the sources of stress encountered by individuals and *strains* are the psychological responses to the stressors [6]. The model proposes three categories of technology

features (see Figure 1). First, “usability features” that involve *usefulness* that refers to the individual's perceived ability to do more with the technology, and *complexity* that refers to increased work demanded by IT. Second, “intrusive features,” which refers to the invasiveness of ITs, i.e., the degree to which the technology enables users to be reachable, and anonymous (see Figure 1). Third, “pace of change”, which relates to the dynamic nature of IT, e.g. rapid technological developments. The P-T model also identifies *stressors*, and categorizes these under the themes of (1) *work overload*, i.e., the perception that assigned work exceeds an individual's capability, and relates to role ambiguity, invasion of privacy and work-home conflict. (2) *Role ambiguity* is the unpredictability of the consequences of the users' performance. (3) *Job insecurity* is the perception of the threat of job loss. (4) *Work-home conflict* is the perceived conflict between the demands of work and family and *invasion of privacy* involves the perception that an individual's privacy has been compromised (see Figure 1). The stressors can in turn bring about “strains,” that is, reactions to the negative experience of IT such as reduced productivity, lack of innovation, burnout and less organizational loyalty and commitment [9] (see Figure 1).

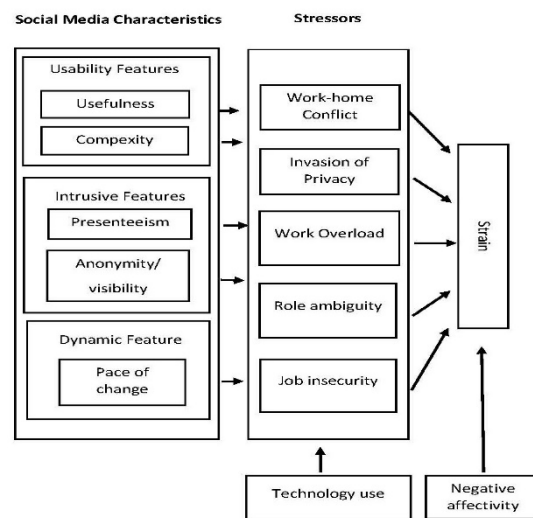


Figure 1 - Technostress framework, adapted from Ayyagari et al. [7]

4. Research setting and methodology

A case study design was used since it is appropriate when studying phenomenon in a real-life context [43]. In the present study, an interpretative approach has been used, as the aim is to understand the phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them [28].

This methodology is relevant in the present study where the aim is to gain insight in the experiences of positive and negative stress and strain related to social media use among hotel employees. The empirical data was collected between 2013 and 2020. Hence, employees' early interpretations of the implementation and use of social media have been studied as well as use over time. Collecting data over a period of seven years gave the possibility of gaining insights into social media use over time with its stressors and strains, not just a snapshot in time.

4.1 Data collection

The data was generated mainly from individual, semi-structured, in-depth interviews. The interviews were conducted in a narrative form [28] to gain insight into the employees' concrete experiences of MOSM use and technostress. Narratives are rich descriptions of procedures that include a beginning, middle, and end and are best taken from individuals who have directly experienced the studied phenomenon. Furthermore, narratives can be useful for uncovering specific explanations of individual IT use and behavior [29]. The primary data collection technique was based on 58 semi-structured interviews conducted with 36 hotel employees. Of these, 22 were follow-up interviews. The interviews were conducted in eight European countries between 2013 and 2020. Half of the employees were women and half were men, and their age ranged from 23 to 43. The employees varied in terms of their private SM use experience, from using with low interest to being very active users. A majority of them used two or less SM in their private lives, while a few used three or more SM. At work, all employees were using three or more OSM. All of the employees used smartphones at work. The interviewed employees had varying occupational statuses including marketing manager, sales manager, front office manager and CRM manager. However, all of them had social media use included in their work tasks, hence social media use was mandatory for these employees. The interviews lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. Furthermore, the statements made during the interviews were related to what was observed and read in the various documents, such as the project plans and online observations of social media use. Hence, gathering narratives from the users gave insights into their perceptions about the use of MOSM over time including early and ongoing use and stressors and strains related to this. The interview guide was developed to expose real-life narratives. Hence the employees were asked to thoroughly describe how they use social media in the workplace, stressful situations related to social media, other stressors

related to the social media implementation and ongoing use, and how this had affected them in their work but also private life. More detailed follow-up questions were also asked in order to expose perceptions, stressors, and strains. To understand the work/life relation to organizational social media, the respondents were asked to describe their private use of social media as well as what types of IT in general and social media in particular they generally use, for what purposes, and to what extent. Essentially, this narrative approach allowed the employees to describe their experiences of MOSM in their own words without being restricted to or guided by the researchers' terminology. Hence, speculation and hypothetical scenarios could be avoided [30].

Other, different data techniques have also been used, including workplace observations, online observations, and written materials such as social media policies and strategies. Studying the employees in their natural settings gave insights into how they use MOSM at work and what work practices are related to that use. Doing online observations improved the understanding of how the professionals interacted in different social media channels during their daily work routines and gave relevant background information in relation to the interview situation. Written materials and documentation, such as social media strategies and policies and organization charts, served as contextual information.

4.2 Analysis

The unit of analysis was the individual user's (hotel employee's) perception of both negative and positive stressors, and strains deriving from the use of MOSM. An inductive analysis process was employed grounded in the empirical findings. First, open coding was used resulting in identifying themes in the data related to stress deriving from social media. Categories from the P-T fit framework [7] were used, i.e., technology features, MOSM use, stressors and strains. Straus and Corbin's [32] recommendations inspired to do axial coding after open coding, but this technique was treated as a method through which to discover relationships in the data, not as an overly restrictive set of rules [33]. Examples of these labels include "working after hours," "always being available" and "lack of understanding and knowledge." In the following step, the recurrent patterns of MOSM use and stressors were emphasized as well as the strains of these stressors. Furthermore, the strains were related to their causes and what technological features/characteristics had caused the stress and led to strains (see Table 1.). The data was triangulated by

ensuring that main insights were repeated in multiple interviews [34].

| Category | Description | Examples from data |
|--|--|--|
| SM characteristics | | |
| Visibility and persistence | Published content in SM is visible to a big audience and is difficult to erase | "Everyone can see what you write and post so you can't get it wrong." |
| Push notifications | Automatic notifications from SM platforms when users interact | "I get red alerts all the time, sometimes it's just someone that has liked a picture or sometimes it's a really bad review." |
| Multiple purposes | Flexibility in SM usefulness | "We use it for so many things, marketing, analyzing data, answering customer reviews..." |
| Real-time interactions | Real-time encounters with guests and colleagues | "I just keep getting new posts, new reviews, new questions on Messenger..." |
| SM stressors – both positive and negative | | |
| Work overload | SM causes more workload e.g. in the form of information overload | "It [SM] gives us so much more to do, so many more things to keep up with, and it feels like you are never done." |
| Reachability and presence | Smartphones and SM make it possible to always be reached | "I am constantly connected, always online." |
| Work-home conflict | The use of SM at work blurs boundaries between work and private life | "I feel very loyal to both my colleagues and to our guests so I never turn my phone off." |
| Digital encounters | SM are new encounters for service | "We get questions everywhere, on Instagram, on Facebook and on LinkedIn! We try to answer them all..." |
| Changing algorithms | SM are constantly changing features | "I try to keep up with all the new stuff but it's really hard because it keeps changing." |
| SM strains | | |
| Ignore social media | Due to lack of time, employees ignore using SM | "It's impossible to do it all, I mean I have to help the guests at the hotel first, then I can deal with the ones online". |
| Role ambiguity | Uncertainty about work roles/or using new roles to develop | "I'm a hotelier, not an IT expert." / "I love social media, because I can learn so much about our guests" |

Table 1 – Axial coding schemes and examples from data

5. Findings

5.1 Social media redundancy

The data reveals that the employees use many different social media platforms for different purposes. Interestingly, the number of social media platforms used by the hotels has shifted during the seven years of the study. In 2013 there was a focus on Facebook and Twitter. However, as new social media platforms have emerged and developed, the number of social media platforms used increased during those seven years. For example, Instagram, YouTube and third-party platforms became important venues. The employees describe that social media is relevant to use in their work in several ways, e.g. for creating relationships with customers. Furthermore, they are

active in platforms used by the guests, such as TripAdvisor or Booking.com. This is because the third-party platforms are important when managing the hotel's brand and reputation. The employees express a lack of integration between social media platforms and existing IT, which was described as a problem during the seven years of the study. The employees express that they have to switch between different mobile devices and desktop systems to receive the information they require, which was expressed as stressful by many employees. Here, one employee stated:

There are so many channels to keep track of. We use Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. You get it? Then of course we have all the usual stuff, like our own booking system and our CRM system. And email of course. Not to mention all the phone calls.... It's a mess!

The quote above illustrates that due to the use of multiple social media, the employees have been introduced to a new ecosystem of IT, which they are not used to. Evidently, this causes new negative stressors but also need for sensemaking and knowledge.

5.2 Social media characteristics

Many of the employees felt that their current knowledge of social media quickly loses its relevance as they are quickly replaced or changed. The employees express that keeping up with the developments is stressful and they do not always consider it worth the effort. Numerous employees says that social media channels are not technologically difficult to grasp per se, that is, there is not high complexity related to social media, but it takes time and frequent use to figure them out. Hence, the time it takes for frequent use is the biggest challenge for them, not the new technology per se. The employees describes that push notifications and alerts from the platforms make them stressed and that it is very hard "not to give them any notice," and that they disrupt their other work tasks. One of the employee says:

Whenever I see a red mark or hear the signal [push notification], I just leave everything I do and look. It is annoying but I just can't seem to help it.

The employees also express that the push notifications reveal how fast they answer customers and that it is a way for managers and other employees to keep track of how fast the staff answers and interacts with customers. Hence, these social media characteristics were related to negative stressors. Furthermore, the

data reveals changed expectations towards both presence and speed which has led to increased pressure on employees to reply quickly to guests in social media platforms. The employees experience that “the need for speed is crazy,” and that the fact that so much activity in social media happens “in real time” causes distraction in their work routines. Furthermore, they emphasize that everything they post and write on social media platforms is visible to others and very hard to erase. This makes them think twice before they post, or avoid posting, both in public and internal social media platforms, which can be viewed as a strain.

5.3 Work overload and information overload

The employees emphasize that they find it stressful to be present in and to switch focus from one social media channel to another, giving a feeling of never being done with a work task. One of the employees exemplifies this by saying: “It’s a never-ending story with social media. You can work with it all the time and you never finish.” The example points out the consequences the new technology has had on organizational routines and work tasks. Overall, this is expressed as stressful with negative consequences, for example lack of work efficiency and concentration on one specific task. They express different levels of stress, for example that the use of social media has rearranged their work routines and procedures at the entire hotel but also their personal work routines. With social media, the employees experience that they get much more information, both from customers and from management, in many different channels. However, while some employees express negative stress related to all information, some see it as a positive outcome (stressor). One of the employees says:

The positive thing about social media is that I can get so much information about the guest. So of course, I check them out! I can see if they have a million followers, if they like chocolate or if they have been here before. I can use this to give them more personal service and it is great!

The quote above illustrates that the employees use stressors deriving from social media for innovation, which can also be seen as a way of coping with the stress and making sense of it.

5.4 Work-home conflict

The empirical data suggests that the introduction and use of MOSM especially creates negative stress for employees because of increased availability, which

seemed to increase during the study. Due to ubiquitous internet access and use of smartphones, they express that they are always available even when they are not working. Furthermore, they express that the reachability has blurred the boundaries of their private life and work. Also, they express a conflict related to reachability, which is the wish to do a great job and provide good service for their customers, but also be available to help their colleagues, is more important than to be unavailable. Hence, most employees do not turn off their work phone when they are off duty. One employee says:

I always check our social media channels, it’s the last thing I do before I go to bed and the first thing I do in the morning. I do it because I want to know what is going on and to be on top of things. I want the guests to know that we are there for them 24/7.

The case data suggests that the use of social media especially affects negative stress levels of employees because of increased reachability. Because they use their smartphones both at work and in their private lives, and seldom turn them off, they are often able to be reached. This is commonly regarded as problematic and related to negative stress. In the employees experience, the increased availability led to a high amount of interruptions in their private lives. The employees express a concern of being always on call. One of the employees says:

I don’t have to answer that message on social media but I do it anyway because I don’t want it to grow and become a bigger problem. It’s a kind of agreement that we have, to be available although it’s not in our job description or contract. You just do it anyway.

Although they were not “forced” to answer when they are off duty, they express that it is “something you do anyway,” and that “it is an unspoken part of the deal” among the colleagues. Furthermore, the employees describe an increased need for speed due to social media. They express a constant stress of answering customers quickly, not letting them wait for service. Most employees express that this is problematic and view it as a negative consequence of their work. However, they also express that they accept it and say that it is part of their work and an unspoken agreement to be available. Interestingly, some of the younger employees saw it as a positive stressor, to be able to answer quickly, and to always be on call.

5.5 Role ambiguity

The employees describe that they sometimes feel insecure in their work role and their work task when they are being transmitted to social media platforms. They emphasize that it is a brand new arena for them, that many of them do not feel comfortable with. Here, the private use of social media also reflects the professional use. Those employees that use social media in their private lives express that they are more secure in what language to use and how to act in social media while the ones who are not frequent users are more insecure, and stressed about not knowing “how to walk the walk and talk the talk.” One of the employees says:

“Everything changes so fast. I tried to learn Instagram, but then they said we would not use it anymore so I felt that it’s a waste. It’s like, what’s next? I can’t keep up.”

One of the negative stressors here is exemplified by the new digital encounters with customers. The employees express that they are used to seeing their customers and that they are used to evaluating e.g. complaints in situ. With social media, these encounters take place online without any physical presence, and hence the employees lose their ability to interpret the situation. The employees express different ways of coping or managing these situations. Some of them “ignore” social media channels and focus on the more physical service encounters, letting other colleagues answer questions and complaints in social media, which can be viewed as a strain. Also, one way of coping with insecurity in digital service encounters is using pre-written answers in order to answer the guests properly in social media. Interestingly some employees expressed positive stress due to the speed of change of social media and the new knowledge that they felt was necessary. They describe that due to that they are “good at social media” and “understand the basics of it” they have gotten a different work role as “experts”, introducing and teaching other employees how to use social media. One of the employees explains:

I offered to help my colleagues to understand the basics. I mean I love social media and use it all the time, but some of my colleagues does not and for them it is all a big mystery and they do not like it because they don’t understand it.

The quote above illustrates that the role ambiguity deriving from MOSM use is not necessarily related to negative stress and that employees can use stressors in order to create positive outcomes.

6. Discussion

6.1 Stressors and strains

The present longitudinal qualitative case study contributes to the existing literature on social media–induced technostress with respect to MOSM use over time, by identifying and analyzing both positive and negative stressors [9; 39] and strains. A first reading of the findings confirms many of the established insights from both IS research (cf. 23, 24) and organizational research (cf. 13; 14). For example, the case confirms earlier research discussion about workload, work/life balance and availability [25, 27, 28]. Another characteristic, the constant alerts, push notifications, from MOSM at all hours of the day was referred to as a source of negative stress for many of the employees over the seven years. The findings suggest that social media characteristics such as visibility [7, 4] persistence [37], and real-time interactions and reachability [1], were closely related to negative stress, that is, “bad” experiences of using social media at work. For instance, employees were very aware of that mistakes made in social media platforms are difficult to erase and can have negative consequences, which created a negative stress related to insecurity. This is an illustration of anonymity related to whether the use of the technology can be tracked or not [3]. Hence, the visibility was also interpreted as a control mechanism, e.g. that managers could control how the employees acted in social media, which obviously created negative stress. Furthermore, the study identified necessity to frequently switch contexts between different platforms and combine them with other IT used in their workplaces as a negative stressor. Hence, the usefulness [7] of MOSM was not related to efficiency or the ability to do more. Instead the employees express that use of MOSM created more work on top of everything else. While most earlier research, as mentioned above, focuses on one specific type of social media (cf. 24; 25; 26; 37), it is apparent that the use of MOSM in the workplace is the source of much negative stress for employees, and has profound impacts on rearranging work practices [16, 17] as well as work-life balance [26]. The study identifies that social media redundancy, i.e., the use of a range of social media platforms for a variety of purposes, created a lack of synchronization, both between the social media platforms and with other IT used in the organizations. As stated by the employees, the use of multiple social media created a flexible way of working, but also flexible boundaries concerning life and work, and hence can be linked to a high degree of privacy intrusion [6]. The pace of change [7], i.e., the

changing algorithms in social media platforms was described as a negative stressor for many employees. Many employees expressed the feeling of lagging behind the constant change of social media algorithms and features. Notably, contradictory stressors were found. Some employees similarly expressed a feeling of both negative and positive stress, for example, when they delivered “good service” or solved a problem. That is, although they experienced negative stress deriving from the alerts, they expressed that they felt it was a positive feeling in the end. However, at the same time, they emphasized that MOSM gave them a heavy workload that many of them did not wish for. This contradiction is a striking feature of the present study. The reactions, or *strains* [8], related to the social media use were also illustrated in the case data. Over the seven years, many of the employees explained that they simply “ignored” the use of social media during times of heavy workload. This can be viewed as a “survival strategy”, and a way of coping with negative stress [7]. Also, the case data illustrates that “ranking” the importance of different social media platforms, e.g. third-party platforms, was experienced as important as it was easy to “measure” one’s activities. This also creates a relationship between the visibility characteristics of social media and stress [26]. Interestingly, one way of “surviving” the heavy workload was to transform negative stressors, e.g. management demand and control of the social media use, into a positive stressor, by directing attention to the guests and the improvement of service. That is, by pointing out that the hotel guests’ positive experience of service in social media was a positive stressor for the employees.

6.2 Development of the P-T fit model

The P-T fit framework has been used in a wide range of studies of technostress [cf. 8, 9]. However, as the P-T fit model is based on traditional IT used by organizations, it can therefore be argued that new categories are needed for the framework to reach its potential contribution to knowledge about both positive and negative stressors deriving from social media use at work (see Figure 2). The present study therefore argues that it can be relevant to add the categories of “private use” and “positive stressors” in Ayyagari et al.’s [7] P-T fit model. The category of “private use” gives information about users’ personal use of social media. This can point out important stressors related to social media, not least since social media is heavily used in individuals’ private lives and is very flexible in use and purpose, hence quite different from other IT used at work [4]. While the technostress literature has primarily focused on issues

of negative stress induced by IT and social media [24; 28; 38], the findings in the present study show that the same individual can experience both negative and positive stress deriving from MOSM simultaneously. This insight could be linked to the employees’ private use of social media. Furthermore, taking into consideration the growing use of IT consumerization in organizations, that is, the use of private devices in a work setting, [37] can arguably be interesting to develop and adapt the P-T fit model in order to gain a deeper analysis of stressors deriving from social media. In this way, the shift between private SM and professional SM use is highlighted. The second category, “positive stressors,” sheds light on positive or “good” experiences of social media use at work. In the present case study, these stressors are mainly related to employees’ positive role ambiguity and ability to use their knowledge of social media to create new work tasks, e.g. helping colleagues, or creating better service for customers. Hence, the positive stressors can be related to employee’s innovative capabilities as well as creativity [42]. Also, employees that experienced positive stressors emphasized that they appreciate the challenge and could learn something from their failures with social media, which can also be found in earlier studies of positive stressors [24].

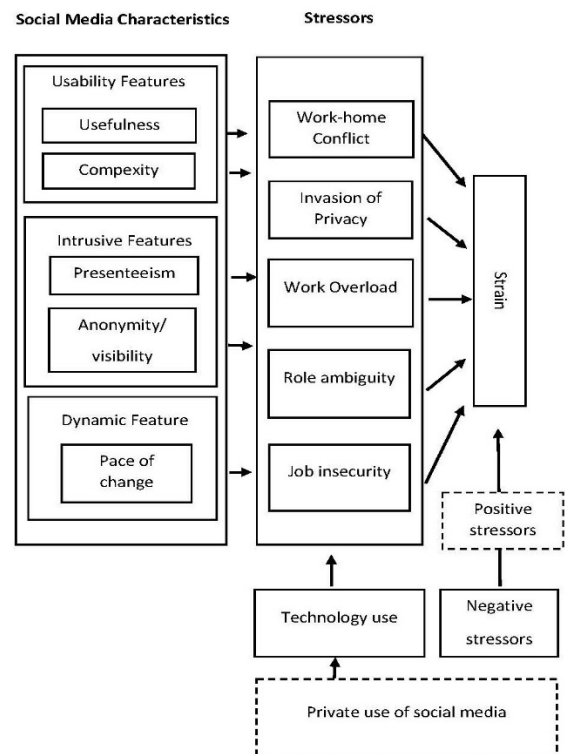


Figure 2 – Suggestions for a developed P-T fit model

7. Conclusions, practical implications, limitations and future research

Earlier research have emphasized that the increasing use of multiple social media platforms in the workplace for different purposes can be related with negative side effects such as technostress [cf. 6, 8]. However, recent research have pointed out that employees can experience both negative and positive technostress deriving from social media use at work. Though prior studies concerning social media-induced stress have provided valuable understanding regarding negative stressors, they have not examined the both negative and positive stressors and strains related to using MOSM over time. Thus, the present study aimed to explore this area of research. The paper makes several contributions to literature on technostress. First, by combining the study of technostress and techno-distress to the IS discipline the present study revealed that MOSM use can contribute to work overload, lack of synchronization between social media and other IT as well as intrusion in private life and role ambiguity. Second, the findings suggest that there are also positive technology stressors linked e.g. to availability, which the employees associated with doing a good job, but also creativity, for example using social media to gain more knowledge about customers and provide better service. This means that employees may, for instance, perceive information overload as a challenging opportunity to learn more, or engage in their work tasks in other ways. Hence, the positive stress that occurs when individual employees cope with an MOSM-stressor can create a positive feeling of success, or personal development. In addition, the study gives suggestions for a developed P-T fit model, [6] that can be more suitable to analyze social media use in organizations.

The present study also has practical implications that can be of value for organizations and their employees. By identifying and linking stressors related to the features of social media platforms, managers and employees can acknowledge strains and create an understanding of why they appear and actively act to reduce them. Also, by acknowledging individual employees' private use and experience of social media, knowledge can be captured, and negative stressors can be reduced. In conclusion the knowledge about that that employees see it as an important part of their professional identity in being available around the clock, since they relate this with doing a good job, is relevant to acknowledge by management. Although this can be viewed as positive technostress, it can also

generate for work overload and create negative balance between life and work. The study has several limitations. Only one corporation was studied, and therefore the generalizability of the findings is limited. Future research could complement the findings by, for example, analyzing a different corporations and combining the qualitative method with quantitative methods in order to create a greater understanding of both positive and negative stressors.

8. References

- [1] S. Aral, C. Dellarocas, & D. Godes (2013). "Introduction to the special issue – social media and business transformation: A framework for research." *Information Systems Research*, 24(1), pp. 3–13.
- [2] Q., Chen, J., Hu, J., W., Zhang., Evans, R., X., Ma, (2020). Employee use of public social media: theories, constructs and conceptual frameworks. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 1-25.
- [3] J.W. Treem, & P.M., Leonardi, "Social Media Use in Organizations Exploring the Affordances of Visibility, Editability, Persistence and Association." *Communication Yearbook*, 36, 2012, pp. 143-189-
- [4] M. de Reuver, C., Sørensen, & R. C. Basole, (2018). "The digital platform: a research agenda." *Journal of Information Technology*, 33(2), pp. 124-135.
- [5] J.H. Kietzmann, Hermkens, K., McCarthy, I. P., & Silvestre, B. S. (2011). "Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media." *Business Horizons*, 54(3), pp. 241-251.
- [6] E., Bucher, C., Fieseler, & A Suphan,. (2013). "The stress potential of social media in the workplace." *Information, Communication & Society*, 16(10), pp. 1639-1667.
- [7] R. Ayyagari, V. Grover, & R. Purvis, (2011). "Technostress: technological antecedents and implications." *MIS Quarterly*, pp. 831-858.
- [8] K. Stephens, Cho, J. & D. Ballard, (2012). "Simultaneity, sequentiality, and speed: Organizational messages about multiple-task completion." *Human Communication Research*, Vol. 38, no. 1, pp. 23–47.
- [9] M. Tarafdar, J. F. Cooper, & C. L. Stich,. (2019). "The technostress trifecta – techno eustress, techno distress and design: Theoretical directions and an agenda for research." *Information Systems Journal*, 29(1), pp. 6-42.
- [10] I. Hwang, & O. Cha, (2018). "Examining technostress creators and role stress as potential threats to employees' information security compliance." *Computers in Human Behavior*, 81, pp. 282-293.
- [11] S. Dittes, & S. Smolnik, (2017). "Why are we doing this again? Towards uncovering the outcome perspective of enterprise social software use." *European Conference on Information Systems, Portugal*.
- [12] M. Moqbel, & N. Kock, (2018). "Unveiling the dark side of social networking sites: Personal and work-related consequences of social networking site addiction." *Information & Management*, 55(1), pp. 109-119.

- [13] C. L. Cooper, P. J. Cooper, C. P. Dewe, M. P. O'Driscoll (2001). *Organizational stress: A review and critique of theory, research, and applications*. Sage.
- [14] T. Ragu-Nathan, M. Tarafdar, R. Nathan, & Q. Tu (2008). "The consequences of technostress for end users in organizations: Conceptual development and empirical validation." *Information Systems Research*, 19(4), 417-433.
- [15] M. Tarafdar, Q. Tu, B.S. Ragu-Nathan, & T.S. Ragu-Nathan (2007). "The impact of technostress on role stress and productivity." *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 24(1), 301-328.
- [16] S. Brooks, & C. Califf (2017). "Social media-induced technostress: Its impact on the job performance of IT professionals and the moderating role of job characteristics." *Computer Networks*, 114, pp. 143-153.
- [17] K. Wang, Q. Shu, & Q. Tu (2008). "Technostress under different organizational environments: An empirical investigation." *Computers in Human Behavior*, 24(6), pp. 3002-3013.
- [18] S. Schellhammer, R. Haines, & S. Klein (2013, January). "Investigating technostress in situ: understanding the day and the life of a knowledge worker using heart rate variability". In *2013 46th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences* (pp. 430-439). IEEE.
- [19] C. Brod, (1982). "Managing Technostress: Optimizing The Use of Computer Technology." *Personnel Journal* Vol. 61 no. 10, pp. 753-757..
- [20] M. M. Weil, & L. D. Rosen (1997). *Technostress: Coping with technology@ work@ home@ play*. New York: Wiley, pp. 29-32.
- [21] J. A. LePine, N. P. Podsakoff, & M. A. LePine (2005). "A meta-analytic test of the challenge stressor-hindrance stressor framework: An explanation for inconsistent relationships among stressors and performance." *Academy of Management Journal*, 48(5), pp. 764-775.
- [22] W. H Hung, K. Chen, & C. P. Lin (2015). "Does the proactive personality mitigate the adverse effect of technostress on productivity in the mobile environment?" *Telematics and Informatics*, 32(1), pp. 143-157.
- [23] Q. Tu, M. Tarafdar, T. S. Ragu-Nathan, & B.S. Ragu-Nathan (2008). "Improving end-user satisfaction through techno-stress prevention: some empirical evidences." *AMCIS 2008 Proceedings*, 236.
- [24] Salo, M., Pirkkalainen, H., Makkonen, M., & Hekkala, R. (2018). Distress, Eustress, or No Stress?: Explaining Smartphone Users' Different Technostress Responses. In *International Conference on Information Systems*. Association for Information Systems (AIS).
- [25] W. Van Osch, & C. K. Coursaris (2013, January). "Organizational social media: A comprehensive framework and research agenda." In *2013 46th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*, pp. 700-707. IEEE.
- [26] K. Dery, D. Kolb, & J. McCormick (2014). "Working with Connective Flow: How Smartphone Use Is Evolving in Practice." *European Journal of Information Systems*, 23(5), pp. 558-570.
- [27] W. van Zoonen, & J. W. Treem (2019). "The role of organizational identification and the desire to succeed in employees' use of personal twitter accounts for work." *Computers in Human Behavior*, 100, 26-34.
- [28] H. Ali-Hassan, D. Nevo, & M. Wade (2015). "Linking dimensions of social media use to job performance: The role of social capital." *The Journal of Strategic Information Systems*, 24(2), 65-89.
- [29] C. Maier, S. Laumer, A. Eckhardt, & T. Weitzel (2014). "Explaining technical and social stressors in techno-social systems: theoretical foundation and empirical evidence." In Maier, C. (Ed.), *Technostress: Theoretical foundation and empirical evidence*, München
- [30] M. D. Myers, & D. Avison (Eds.). (2002). *Qualitative research in information systems: a reader*. Sage.
- [31] B. T. Pentland (1999, January). Narrative methods in collaborative systems research. In *Proceedings of the 32nd Annual Hawaii International Conference on Systems Sciences. 1999. HICSS-32. Abstracts and CD-ROM of Full Papers*, p. 1035. IEEE.
- [32] D. M. Gruen, M. A. Sheldon, & S. Vaithaynathan (2002). *U.S. Patent No. 6,393,460*. Washington, DC: U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.
- [33] A. L. Strauss, J. M. Corbin, S. Niewiarra, & J. Legewie (1996). *Grounded theory: Grundlagen qualitativer sozialforschung*. Weinheim: Beltz,
- [34] C. Urquhart (2007). The evolving nature of grounded theory method: The case of the information systems discipline. *The Sage Handbook of Grounded Theory*, pp. 339-359.
- [35] K. H. Myers, & H. K. Klein (1999). "A set of principles for conducting and evaluating interpretive field studies in information systems." *MIS Quarterly*, 23(1), pp. 67-94
- [36] A. Forstner, & D. Nedbal (2017). A problem-centered analysis of enterprise social software projects. *Procedia computer science*, 121, 389-397.
- [37] M. Trier, M., Fung, & A. Hansen, (2017). Uncertainties as barriers for knowledge sharing with enterprise social media.
- [38] K. Högberg, (2018). *Persistent Digital Service Encounters: Challenges of organizational use of social media in a hotel chain* (Doctoral diss., University West).
- [39] K., Ortbach, S., Köffer, C. P. Müller, F., & B., Niehaves, (2013). How IT Consumerization Affects the Stress Level at Work: A Public Sector Case Study. In *PACIS* (p. 231).
- [40] C.B. Califf, S., Sarker, S, and C. Fitzgerald., "The Bright and Dark Sides of Technostress: An Empirical Study of Healthcare Workers," *Proceedings of 36th International Conference on Information Systems*, Fort-Worth, TX.
- [41] J. G Harris, B., Ives, & I. Junglas, (2011). The genie is out of the bottle: Managing the infiltration of consumer IT into the workforce. *Accenture Institute for High Performance*, 1-12.
- [42] N. A Azhar, (2020). Social media at the workplace: The relationship between techno eustress and employee performance at Universiti Malaysia Pahang.
- [43] G., Ding, H., Liu, S., Wei, & J. Gu, (2015). Leveraging Work-Related Stressors for Employee Innovation: The Moderating Role of Enterprise Social Networking Use.
- [44] R.K., Yin (2018), *Case study research: Design and methods*, Sixth edition, Sage, Los Angeles, London, New Dehli, Singapore, Washington DC, Melbourne.